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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/981,992	10/19/2001	Santiago E. del Puerto	1857.0290000	7081
26111	7590	11/17/2003	EXAMINER	
STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX PLLC 1100 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005			FULLER, RODNEY EVAN	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2851	

DATE MAILED: 11/17/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/981,992	DEL PUERTO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Rodney E Fuller	2851	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 August 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 and 37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 and 37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 August 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Remarks

1. In response to applicant's Amendment, dated August 26, 2003, the examiner acknowledges the cancellation of claims 28-36. Claims 1-27 and 37 are pending.
2. The examiner acknowledges the corrections of the objections to the Specification and Drawings as set forth in the Office Action mailed June 16, 2003.
3. The claim objection set forth in the Office Action mailed June 16, 2003 was not addressed. Hence, the objection is repeated below.
4. Regarding the 35 U.S.C. 102(e) rejection of claims 1-27 and 37 as being anticipated by Hara, et al. (US 2001,0035942 A1), the examiner has considered the applicant's arguments and withdraws the rejection.

Claim Objections

5. Claim 1 recites the limitation "a second gate valve" in line 6. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim, i.e., there is no "first" gate valve in claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claims 1-27 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Saiki (US 5,376,212).

Regarding claims 1 and 37, Saiki discloses “a lithography patterning chamber (Fig. 1, ref.# 41); a wafer exchange (Fig. 1, ref.# 43) chamber coupled to said lithography patterning chamber; and at least one alignment load-lock (Fig. 1, 30) separated from said wafer exchange chamber by a second gate valve (Fig. 1, ref.# 46), said at least one alignment load-lock including an alignment stage (column 4, lines 15-28) that aligns a wafer.”

Regarding claim 2, Saiki discloses “wherein said wafer exchange chamber is separated from said lithography patterning chamber by a first gate valve (Fig. 1, ref.# 48).”

Regarding claim 3, Saiki discloses “wherein said alignment stage aligns said wafer during a pump down stage.” (column 4, lines 15-28)

Regarding claim 4, Saiki discloses “wherein said at least one alignment load-lock (Fig. 1, ref.# 45) is a bi-directional alignment load-lock separated from a track by a third gate valve.”

Regarding claim 6, Saiki discloses “wherein said at least one alignment load-lock comprises a plurality of alignment load-locks.” (Fig. 1, ref.#s 43, 44, 45)

Regarding claim 13, Saiki discloses “where in said at least one alignment load-lock further comprises wafer supports (Fig. 1, ref.#s 32) for holding a wafer within said at least one alignment load lock.”

Regarding claim 19-25 and 37, Saiki discloses “at least one chuck.” (Fig. 1, ref.# 32)

Regarding claims 26 and 27, Saiki discloses “wherein said lithography patterning chamber (Fig. 1, ref.# 41) includes at least one exposure stage that holds a chuck with a wafer during lithography patterning.” (Fig. 4, ref.# 86)

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

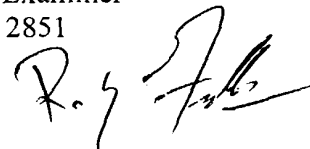
Fuse, et al. (US 5,217,501), Kawahara, et al. (US 2002/0081175), Hattori, et al. (US 2002/0074635) and Sieradzki (US 5,486,080) each disclose a lithography patterning chamber, a wafer exchange chamber and at least one load-lock.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rodney E Fuller whose telephone number is 703-306-5641. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00am - 4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Russ Adams can be reached on 703-308-1436. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1782.

Rodney E Fuller
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2851



November 10, 2003